The University of Vermont

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
JOHN DEWEY HALL
BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05405

August 13, 1982

Mr. Charles R. Wall, Esq.
Shook, Hardy & Bacon
20th Floor, Mercantile Bank Tower
Kansas City, MO 64106

Dear Chuck:

As a follow-up to our telephone conversation, I am writing this letter to propose that we explore the possibility of setting up a small research activity in the Department of Psychology here at The University of Vermont.

As I told you, I have discussed with Professor Rik Musty the questions related to tobacco consumption, and particularly to the questions of whether deciding to smoke, deciding to quit, difficulties in quitting -- in short, many of the questions we have talked about at our earlier meetings -- can be explained in terms of freedom of choice, environmental stimulation, conditioning, etc.

Musty, who is Chair of our department, has been involved for a number of years in research on marijuana use, alcohol use, and the effects of social stimulation on the consumption of these substances (his curriculum vitae, enclosed, will give you an idea of the work he has done in these areas). At the moment a young faculty member, Mark Bouton is working with Rik in our animal laboratory on Valium and Librium ingestion in animals. There are a couple of other faculty members who are also knowledgeable about these matters who might be interested in contributing to a research effort.

As a first step, I would envisage hiring a doctoral student to help us review the relevant literature around the following questions:

(1) Does nicotine fit the psychopharmacological criteria of physical addictions?

(2) Does nicotine consumption become a habit that is conditioned to stimuli in the environmental situations in which it is consumed?

If the answer to (1) is negative, and the answer to (2) is positive, then (3) can appropriate unlearning techniques be applied in humans who decide they want to maintain a tobacco consumption-free state? I am also interested in questions related to the cross-cultural and social class distribution of tobacco use.

Using library computer search techniques available to faculty, we would prepare a literature review and analysis to determine whether or not definitive answers to these questions are available. Following this first stage, we would then prepare

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a report analyzing the evidence and proposing additional research that would be necessary to obtain more definitive answers to these and related questions.

We would be delighted to talk with you and Pat Sirridge, and your proposal that you come to Burlington to meet the people involved seems appropriate and desirable. As a first approximation of the sort of money we are talking about for the first year, the standard stipend for a doctoral student, working 20 hours a week, is approximately $7,000 including tuition and fringe benefits; if several faculty members were able to invest 5% of their time (say 2 hours a week) this would come to another 10 or 12 thousand dollars a year. Our department faculty has established some years ago a non-profit educational foundation, the Psychological Research Foundation of Vermont, which can accept and disperse research monies without the large overhead required of grants made to the university. So we are talking about something around $20,000. After a year we would be in a position to discuss and propose more specific "hands on" research projects.

You will recognize that I am dictating this as an agenda item for discussion. If you and Pat decide to come to Burlington in early October, please give me some suitable dates as soon as possible.

Cordially,

George

George W. Albee
Professor

GWA/hmb

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